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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR EAP/CM, AIAG, OES/IHA, MED, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE AND GH
CDC ATLANTA FOR CCID AND COGH
HHS FOR OGHA - STEIGER, HICKEY
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP
HHS PASS TO FIC/NIH
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, REO AND CDC
BEIJING FOR HHS HEALTH ATTACHE AND RMO
PHNOM PENH FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR
VIENTIANE FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Avian Influenza Update: Human Case Reported in Guangdong Province

REF: A) BEIJING 657, B) GUANGZHOU 113, C) BEIJING 585,

D) GUANGZHOU 47, E) GUANGZHOU 43, F) 07 GUANGZHOU 1279,
G) 07 GUANGZHOU 1075, H) 07 GUANGZHOU 1070

¶1. (U) Summary: The Chinese Government notified Embassy Beijing, Consulate Guangzhou and foreign governments of another suspected human case of avian influenza (AI), this time in Guangdong Province. A 44-year-old female migrant worker fell ill on February 16 after exposure to sick and dead poultry. A medical response team has been dispatched to the area where the case was identified. In addition, according to media reports, officials in Guangxi have taken steps to strengthen AI prevention in response to the human case reported refs A and B. End Summary.

New Case Identified in Guangdong

¶2. (U) The Guangdong Department of Health notified the Consulate and local foreign consulates on February 24 that a suspected human avian influenza case had been detected in Shanwei City, Guangdong Province. Beijing and embassies in China were notified by the Ministry of Health about this case on the same day. The patient is a migrant worker in a brick factory in Dapu Village, Haifeng County, Shanwei City in southeastern Guangdong. She fell ill on February 16, with symptoms of fever, expectoration and pneumonia. On February 22, after being treated in a local health clinic and a local hospital with no improvement, she was transferred to the Pengpai Memorial Hospital in Haifeng County with a diagnosis of "pneumonia with unknown cause." The patient is now in critical condition. An investigation showed that the patient had had contact with sick and dead poultry before becoming ill.

13. (U) Laboratory tests by the Guangdong Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention were positive for H5N1 avian influenza nuclein and negative for SARS coronavirus nuclein and antibodies. Guangdong Provincial Health Department officials have identified the case as a "suspected human AI case" and have submitted the case to the Chinese Ministry of Health for confirmation.

Medical Response Team Dispatched

14. (U) A team from the Guangdong Provincial Health Department with expertise in epidemiological diseases, laboratory tests and clinical treatment has been dispatched to Haifeng County to investigate, assist in treatment and implement prevention and control measures. Those who have had close contact with the patient and sick or dead poultry are under close medical supervision.

Prompt Notification

15. (U) This most recent outbreak in Guangdong has been widely reported in local media. Press reports indicate that Chinese officials have also notified the governments of Hong Kong and Macao SAR. The Guangdong Foreign Affairs Office notified the Consulate on February 25. The Ministry of Health (MOH) notified Embassy Beijing. This is the first time that the MOH has notified the Embassy of an AI case where no/no confirmation of H5N1 has been made by the National Laboratory.

16. (SBU) According to Hong Kong press reports, Zhong Nanshan, director of the Guangzhou Institute of Respiratory Diseases, called on officials to be on alert because recent winter storms had caused

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an increased number of dead birds. However, He Jianfeng, Deputy Director of the Institute of Epidemic Disease Prevention, commented to Consulate staff that this latest case was one more in a series of sporadic cases and was not cause to believe a larger outbreak was imminent.

Guangxi Responds to Previous Case

17. (U) Local media also reported on steps taken in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to respond to the recent human AI case there (refs A and B). Guangxi Vice Chairman Chen Zhangliang told the press that the situation in Guangxi was challenging because recent snowstorms had left large numbers of dead poultry and wild animals. In addition, he noted that vaccination subsidies were not provided in all areas last year, resulting in lower vaccination rates. Guangxi plans to restore subsidies for vaccines, aiming for 100% vaccination within one month, and to improve supervision of disposal of wildlife corpses and sick or dead poultry.

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